

Message Text

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USIA:IMV/C:WHPEARSON

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USIA:IMV:RSSCOTT

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USIA; IMV/A 9

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P 122304Z JUN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: NA

REF: A. MOSCOW 7284(U) B. STATE 115605(C)

1. COINCIDENTAL WITH RECEIPT REFTEL A. GRIFFITH JOHNSON, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, MOTIION PICUTRE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, HAVING RECENTLY RETURNED FORM MEETING HELD DURING CONNES FILM FESTIVAL, NOTIFIED AGENCY MAY 29 MPAA DECISION THAT THERE WILL BE "NO MPAA PRESENCE" AT 1975 MOSCOW FILM FESTIVAL, BUT INDIVIDUAL MEMBER COMPANIES WOULD PARTICPATE AS THEY SAW FIT. JOHNSON INDICATED "COLUMBIA AND FOX MIGHT PARTICIPATE," BUT HAD NO IDEA WHICH FILMS THEY MIGHT ENTER. HE ALSO ADVISED NEITHER MPAA PRESENT JACK VALENTI NOR EASTERN EUROPE VICE PRESIDENT MARC SPIEGEL PLAN TO ATTEND EVENT. JOHNSON KNEW OF NO ENTRIES FROM NON-MPAA PRODUCERS.

2. FYI: JONSON STATED MPAA MEMBER COMPANIES "NOT IN ANY MOOD" TO PROVIDE FILMS FOR FESTIVAL ENTRY IN LIGHT OF UNPRODUCTIVE
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RELATIONS SOVEXPORT PAST SEVERAL YEARS. SUCH PARTICIPATION,

INCLUDING ATTENDANCE FILM PERSONALITIES, INVOLVES CONSIDERABLE EXPENSE FOR COMPANIES WITH LITTLE COMMERCIAL PROSPECT, JOHNSON STATED. HE ALSO MENTIONED SOVIETS INDEBTED COLUMBIA PICTURES IN THE AMOUNT 1.4 MILLION DOLLARS IN CONNECTION DISTRIBUTION SOVIET FILM "LIBERATION."

3. SOVIET EMBASSY WASHINGTON HAS NOT THUS FAR SONCULTED SUBSTANTIVELY WITH THE MPAA RELATIVE TO FORTHCOMING FESTIVAL, EXCEPT TO ASK FOR NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF A FEW FILM PERSONALITIES (SEE REFTEL B.)

4. GIVEN ABSENCE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT INVITATIONS CALLING FOR ACCREDITATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF OFFICIAL UNITED STATES DELEGATION TO THE FESTIVAL, DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY NO LONGER HAVE BASIS FOR FORMAL COOPERATION WITH THE MPAA IN SELECTING AN OFFICIAL FILM ENTRY AND ORGANIZING OFFICIAL DELEGATION TO ATTEND THE EVENT. ALTHOUGH MPAA HAS EXPRESSED NO REGRETS PASSING THIS ARRANGMENT, IT PROVIDED DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY (THROUGH ESTABLISHED INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE) BASIS FOR OBTAINING INDUSTRY COOPERATION IN ORGANIZING PRESTIGIOUS REPRESENTATION AND SELECTION OFFICIAL FEATURE FILM ENTRY WHICH WOULD REFLECT CREDIT ON U.S.

5. EVEN WITH SUCH INVITATION, IT WOULD NOW BE IMPOSSIBLE MOUNT SUCH UNDERTAKING, BUT EMBASSY MAY WISH KEEP IN MIND THAT UNOFFICIAL STATUS MOSCOW(AND KARLOVY-VARY FESTIVAL) REMOVES THIS BASIS FOR INFLUENCING CHARACTER OF PARTICIPATION.

6. WILL ADVISE WHEN ANY INFORMATION ABOUT FEATURE FILM ENTRIES OR PARTICIPANTS SURFACES FROM COMPANIES OR TRADE PRESS.

7. FYI: ON JUNE 10, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ARMITAGE DISCUSSED WITH GRIFFITH JOHNSON THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO PARTICIPATION BY THE FILM INDUSTRY IN THE FESTIVAL. JOHNSON REAFFIRMED THE ASSOCIATION'S EARLIER DECISION. IT IS SUGGESTED THE EMBASSY MAY WISH TO ENCOURAGE ATTENDANCE AT THE FESTIVAL OF PERSONALITIES PRESENTLY INVOLVED IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE FILM "THE BLUE BIRD" IN LENINGRAD.
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DECONTROL DEC 31, 1975.
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